Introduction to “The Forgotten Reformation”

The conference convened from May 31 until June 2, 2018, at the *Stadtarchiv* in Salzburg had originally been planned to coincide with the worldwide celebration of the 500th anniversary of Luther's epoch-making proclamation of the *Ninety-five Theses* but was delayed by one year due to circumstances beyond the control of the organizers. The announced theme was “The Forgotten Reformation.” The intention was to focus on an aspect of the transformation initiated by Luther but ignored by scholars of the confessional, magisterial, and radical reformations: the reforming initiatives that transcended the doctrinal, devotional, and ecclesiastic realms to encompass a more general reconfiguration of philosophy, science, politics, and medicine. Whether or not these reforming impulses were promulgated as part of a general or universal reformation (as was the case with the Rosicrucian manifestoes or the later writings of Jacob Böhme), they followed in the wake of Luther's epochal undertaking and justified themselves implicitly or explicitly in reference to it. If, during the Reformation celebration, these broader reforming impulses were largely neglected, there are longstanding reasons for their exclusion. Paracelsus has been, and still is, uncritically consigned to Renaissance Studies or the history of science and medicine, while Valentin Weigel and Böhme are relegated from their late-Reformation contexts to those of mysticism and Pietism. Our goal was, among other things, to counter the one-sided and rigid allocation of our forgotten reformers by directing attention to a broader perspective.

Salzburg was an appropriate venue for approaching our forgotten reformation, because it was there in 1524/25 that Paracelsus added his unique voice to the diffuse movement inaugurated by Luther in 1517 – to the outpouring that had not yet hardened into a received entity known and bracketed in later centuries as the “Lutheran Reformation.” Like other revolutionary movements, the early Reformation was an unruly cacophony of impassioned voices and insurgent initiatives, from which the historians' analytic procedure had yet to separate out what would later be seen as tangents or accretions to their fields of academic specialization. The premise and objective of the conference resides in the following sequence of events and influences. Responding to Luther's widespread impact, Paracelsus launches his authorial career by penning theological polemics of an anomalous and anticlerical character. His rebellion against established authority soon carries over into and conditions his medical

and philosophical work and thought. This evolving impact subsequently inspires and influences Valentin Weigel, Jacob Böhme, and the author(s) of the Rosicrucian manifestoes, in a sequence or tradition that challenges received authority, aims at sweeping change, and explicitly or implicitly appeals for a religiously inspired reformation of life and learning. In retrospect, we can postulate that the dominance of religious inspiration and the momentum of the movement following 1517 rendered this broader scope of the Reformation inevitable. Unfortunately, scholarly specializations have tended to pare away much that does not fall into institutionally recognized disciplinary boundaries. The objective of our "Forgotten Reformation" is therefore a deeper understanding of the broadest early modern transformation.

The contributions to this volume arrive at a variety of insights within and around this target area and raise additional questions. This is as it should be. Urs Leo Gantenbein traces the textual tendencies at the outset of the forgotten reformation from Paracelsus's early Mariological writings as part of the inaugural religiously motivated phase of his authorial career in Salzburg, thereby revealing both his debt to the initially unorthodox and even radical Lutheran movement and his independence from it. Tobias Bulang situates the writings later attributed to Paracelsus within an early modern genealogy of knowledge, a characteristic mode of thought which asserted that true knowledge was old rather than new (a reflex shared both by the *Philosophia Perennis* and the Lutheran restoration of the true gospel distorted and neglected by papal corruption). Taking the measure of the Paracelsian ascendancy, Didier Kahn and Kathrin Pfister examine the prophetic and cosmological impact of the neglected reformer and his pseudepigraphic acolytes. Chad Gunnoe traces the influence of Paracelsus as reflected in the denunciations and partial acceptances of his opponents. Andrew Weeks discusses Valentin Weigel as a paradigm of an antiauthoritarian tradition which in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries embraces mystical precursors and Paracelsian iconoclasm. Bo Andersson turns to the political paradigm explicit or implicit in the central metaphysical constructs of Böhme's *Aurora*, thereby establishing the this-worldly intentions and implications of the celebrated mystic. Martin Zemla discusses the reforming impulses carried forward in writings attributed to Paracelsus and Weigel. Lucinda Martin shows how Böhme's mystical concepts dovetailed with new assertions of female authority. Ariel Hessayon's study traces the spread of Böhme's writings and impact from Germany and the Netherlands to Great Britain. Lyke de Vries investigates the formulation and sources of the Rosicrucian manifestos.

Several materials which could not be included in the form of full articles nonetheless contributed to a better understanding of the extent of the

forgotten reformation. Peter Kramml summarized what is known of Paracelsus in Salzburg. Urs Leo Gantenbein added information on the channels through which Weigel, Arndt, Böhme, and possibly Caspar Schwenckfeld absorbed the thought of Paracelsus. By surveying Böhme's network of correspondents, Leigh Penman offered insight into the literate grass roots dimension of the movement. Focusing on Heinrich Khunrath's spectacular work, Peter Forshaw demonstrated how themes introduced by Paracelsus came to be articulated in alchemical-theosophical terms. Susanne Åkerman traced the Rosicrucian reformation in Sweden. Kristine Hannak and Andrew Weeks gave a measure of the early breadth of the forgotten reformation by comparing and contrasting two of its important representatives: Sebastian Franck and Johann Arndt as distinct figures who, in contrasting ways, reveal how Lutheran Protestant dissent morphed into a broader quest for reform. Originally, the organizers had also planned to include a special presentation on the important Swedish Paracelsian and runologist Johannes Bureus. We are including the materials by Gantenbein and Hannak/Weeks in an appendix of supplemental materials.

The points made by all the contributors describe a pattern of reforming initiatives which relate first to Paracelsus and subsequently to Weigel, Böhme, and the Rosicrucians. How our findings are to be integrated and interpreted are matters for further study. As organizers, we would like to thank all participants for their valuable contributions and the Daphnis editors Tobias Bulang and Julia Hohrein for their meticulous work on this volume. Warm gratitude is deserved by our host, Dr. Peter Kramml, director of the Salzburg City Archive whose research on Paracelsus in the city has contributed to our approach and cast light on problematic aspects of past Salzburg Paracelsus Studies. For their generous assistance, we thank the Theophrastus Stiftung, Mühlthal, Germany; Dr. Franz Käppeli and his Medica Medizinische Laboratorien in Zurich; and the Swedish Forum for German Studies at Uppsala University and the Royal Society of Humanities at Uppsala.

Bo Andersson

Urs Leo Gantenbein

Andrew Weeks